

Hamilton Field, Frame Building Type E
(Facility Nos. 617, 692, 914, 934)
East of Nave Drive
Novato
Marin County
California

HABS No. CA-2398-CS

HABS
CAL
21-NOVA,
ICS-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HAMILTON FIELD
Frame Building Type E
(Facility Nos. 617, 692, 914, 934)

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Location: Hamilton Army Air Field
Novato, Marin County, California
Frame Building Type E
Lecture Hall (Facility No. 617 [D Street west of F Street]), Airmen's Dining Halls (Facility Nos. 692 [southwest of B Street and A Street intersection], 914 [along Northwestern Pacific Railroad line north of Main Entrance Road]), Barracks (Facility No. 934 [east side of C Street north of Main Entrance Road])

U.S.G.S.: Novato, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1954 (revised 1980)
Petaluma Point, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1959 (revised 1980)
UTM Coordinates: Zone 10; a: 542100/4213620; B: 544720/4212220;
C: 542760/4210650; D: 541040/4212600

Significance:

The building is significant as an example of the application of an important architectural trend (Spanish Colonial Revival) adapted to reflect California's mission heritage in a dramatic departure from traditional military architecture.

Buildings 617, 692, 914, and 934 are considered significant for their association with Air Force history in northern California, and with World War II actions in the Pacific Theater. These service buildings provided the temporary quarters in this area of the base with mess space and a training facility. The width of these units were able to accommodate the additional furniture space required for such utilizations.

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-239B) for a comprehensive Statement of Significance and individual report HABS No. CA-2398-A for a condensed Statement of Significance.

Description:

These one-story frame buildings are rectilinear in shape and measure approximately 40 by 108 feet. They have low-pitched composition shingle gable roofs with louvered vents in the gable ends and overhanging eaves. Metal ventilators, 11 inches square, are located on the ridgelines. Siding is horizontal wood board, covered with asbestos shingles. The foundations are concrete or post on concrete pier; some have partial wood understories on sloping hillside locations. The primary central entries are accessed via a concrete stoop and stairway with two-inch-diameter metal pipe railings or two-inch by four-inch wood rails.

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Double entrance doors, one each end of the buildings, are solid-core wood with four lights and three recessed panels; lock sets are standard metal with exterior Von Duprien thumbblatch locks, with interior round knobs and half-mortised hinges. Doors have metal panic bars on the interior. Windows are eight- over eight-light double hung wood sash in the dining halls, but the lecture hall has a small set of fixed pane windows placed high in the walls.

Original interior walls were covered with gypsum board. Some temporary wood partitions are now present. Subflooring for the barracks is tongue and groove wood with eight-inch-square vinyl asphalt tile covering. Doors are solid core wood with either three or five recessed panels. Heating systems consist of forced air gas heaters; all ductwork is exposed. Original lighting fixtures are of the "schoolhouse" type, with a canopy and suspended milk glass bowl shade. Replacement lights are industrial type open end double tube fluorescent fixtures mounted flush with the ceiling or suspended on rods and chains.

One or two latrines are located in each building. They have ceramic tile floors, with one- by one- inch, one- by two-inch, and two- by two-inch tiles. Walls are clad in four- by four-inch ceramic tile. Showers have four to six shower heads and tile walls and floor. A changing room with wood benches adjoins the shower area. Sinks are enameled cast iron wall-mounted, made by Standard; each has a mirror. There are four to six sinks in each barracks. Three "Standard" wall-mounted urinals and three to four Standard Sanitary Corp. Pacific toilets separated by wood stall partitions are located in each latrine. There are also floor-mounted cast iron mop sinks in each latrine. Lighting fixtures are recessed chrome and glass.

The barracks buildings were modernized in 1954 with the installation of asphalt tile base and flooring, tileboard wainscoting, and exterior asbestos shingle siding. Facility No. 692 has a shed-roofed frame addition along the west side that appears to be in a deteriorating condition at present. Facility Nos. 914 and 934 have been upgraded with modern siding and handicapped access ramps. Also, Facility No. 934 has been enlarged with the addition of two side wings with several shed roofs and modern windows and doors. Although some of these alterations have modified the historic appearance of the World War II-era buildings, their original mass and shape is still evident.

Historical Context:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) and Section B in report HABS No. CA-2398-F.

Facility 934, built as an exchange sales store, was completed in August 1942 for \$17,500.00. In 1965 the interior had been divided into a series of offices for a commander, vice commander, and assistants. Designated a Numbered Airforce Headquarters, this building

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also contained a conference room, reception area, cryptography and computer rooms, and a war room with a command post.

Sources:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-239B) and Section B in report HABS No. CA-239B-F.

See the project field records:

Facility No. 617, Lecture Hall: roll 4, exposures 3-4; roll 5, exposures 5-6; roll 6, exposures 5-B; roll 52, exposures 5-6

Facility No. 692, Airmen's Dining Hall: roll 55, exposures 7-B; roll 61, exposures 7-B; roll 62, exposures 9-10; roll 72, exposures 11-12; roll 73, exposures 1-2

Facility No. 914, Airmen's Dining Hall: roll 103, exposures 5-12

Facility No. 934, Barracks: roll 101, exposures 5-6, 9-10; roll 102, exposures 9-12; roll 103, exposures 1-2

The line drawn sketches were drafted on site in 1994 by Keith Syda, scanned into a computer and drawn by Christopher MacDonald in 1995, and corrected and finalized by Claire Warshaw in 1996 (all PAR Environmental Services, Inc. staff).

Project Information:

Hamilton Army Air Field is owned by various federal entities including the Department of the Navy, Department of the Army, United States Coast Guard, and General Services Administration (GSA). The Army/GSA parcels are being excessed and sold to private developers. The Navy property is included in Base Closure and Realignment actions.

As part of the Army's undertaking, it has been determined in consultation with the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) that the excess sale will have an affect on properties at the air field, and that these properties are components of a district that is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Based on consultation with the OHP and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, pursuant to 36 CFR part 800, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f), a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was entered into by the interested parties in March 1994. The agreement stipulated that prior to excess sale the Army must contact the HABS/HAER division at the Western Regional Office of the National Park Service, San Francisco, California, to determine the appropriate level and kind of recordation for the subject properties. The MOA further stipulated that copies of the documentation be made available to the OHP and

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appropriate local archives designated by the OHP. This recordation has been prepared in order to meet those stipulations.

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Date prepared: July 1995

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